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Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/102.

2. The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, in preparation for its field mission, addressed a letter dated 21 June 2011 to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva, requesting full access to the occupied territories in order to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to it by the General Assembly in resolution 65/102, and the opportunity to hold direct consultations with the concerned Israeli authorities regarding the human rights situation in the occupied territories. No response was received.

3. The Special Committee was supported by various United Nations agencies during the implementation of its mandate, especially the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the offices of the resident coordinators in Egypt and Jordan, who assisted in the organization of the field mission.

4. The Special Committee carried out its first ever mission to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, specifically to the Gaza Strip, by crossing Egypt's border with Gaza. Meetings in the Gaza Strip took place from 21 to 25 July 2011. The Special Committee also convened meetings in Jordan, from 26 to 28 July 2011. In the light of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic during the period in which the field mission took place, the Special Committee engaged with interlocutors in the occupied Syrian Golan by way of videoconferences convened during the visit to Jordan. During its mission, the Special Committee collected testimony from 53 victims, witnesses or representatives of organizations working on human rights in

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the occupied territories. This testimony is reflected in the Special Committee's regular report, transmitted to the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, in accordance with resolution 65/102.

Department of Public Information

5. Pursuant to paragraph 8 (d) of resolution 65/102, the activities below were undertaken.

6. The News and Media Division continued to ensure that news and information about the Special Committee were widely disseminated. The Special Committee's meetings and statements were, in the first instance, covered by a total of eight press releases in English and French, which were issued within hours of the relevant activities.

7. The English and French platforms of the United Nations News Centre posted 14 stories about the activities of the Special Committee throughout the year. These articles were also e-mailed to the News Centre's subscriber base of tens of thousands of readers.

8. United Nations Radio provided regular reports and feature stories in eight languages (the six official languages, plus Kiswahili and Portuguese) on the work, activities and events associated with the Special Committee. Related issues, such as Israeli settlement activity and the demolition of Palestinian homes, especially in East Jerusalem, were also covered extensively, based on the comments and remarks of the Secretary-General and other senior officials and diplomats. United Nations Radio also covered issues related to the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip, the activities of special rapporteurs visiting the region and the overall economic, social and human rights conditions of people living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

9. United Nations Webcast provided live and on-demand coverage of more than 65 open United Nations meetings, briefings and events related to the Palestinian question, including those of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. The Television Section produced two videos on women's issues in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The reports, one on women's health and the second on women's economic empowerment, were broadcast as part of the Section's newsmagazine programme "21st Century" and its series "UN in Action", and were distributed to more than 60 international broadcasters.